

**CLAIMS:**

What is claimed is:

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1. A method in a data processing system for handling a situation, the method comprising:  
responsive to detecting a situation, applying an  
aging function to the situation; and  
presenting alerts regarding the situation based on  
the aging function.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the aging function is  
a decay function.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the aging function  
includes a user settable threshold.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the aging function is  
an increasing time function.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the increasing time  
function is one of a linear function or an exponential  
function.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the aging function is  
a decreasing function.
7. The method of claim 6, wherein the decreasing  
function is a half-life function.

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8. The method of claim 1, wherein the presenting step comprises:

5 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the situation is one of a denial of server, a suspicious Web server request, or an unauthorized access of a server.

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monitoring for events;
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responsive to detecting an event, which triggers a situation, applying an aging function to the situation, wherein the aging function is used to identify a severity of the situation; and

presenting an alert for the situation based on the severity of the situation identified by the aging function.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the situation includes a set of events.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the set of events form a denial of service attack.

13. A data processing system comprising:

a bus system;  
a communications unit connected to the bus system;  
a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the  
memory includes a set of instructions; and

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a processing unit connected to the bus system,  
wherein the processing unit executes the set of  
instructions to apply an aging function to the situation  
in response to detecting a situation; and present alerts  
5 regarding the situation based on the aging function.

14. A data processing system for handling a situation,  
the data processing system comprising:

applying means, responsive to detecting a situation,  
10 for applying an aging function to the situation; and  
presenting means for presenting alerts regarding the  
situation based on the aging function.

15 15. The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the  
aging function is a decay function.

16. The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the  
aging function includes a user settable threshold.

20 17. The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the  
aging function is an increasing time function.

25 18. The data processing system of claim 17, wherein the  
increasing time function is one of a linear function or  
an exponential function.

19. The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the  
aging function is a decreasing function.

30 20. The data processing system of claim 19, wherein the  
decreasing function is a half-life function.

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means for displaying the alert on a console.

22. The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the situation is one of a denial of server, a suspicious Web server request, or an unauthorized access of a server.

23. A computer program product in a computer readable  
10 medium for handling a situation, the computer program  
product comprising:

first instructions, responsive to detecting a situation, for applying an aging function to the situation; and

15        second instructions for presenting alerts regarding  
the situation based on the aging function.

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